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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/888,309	06/21/2001	McLissa K. Carpenter	090/002	9525
22869	7590	10/02/2003	EXAMINER	
GERON CORPORATION 230 CONSTITUTION DRIVE MENLO PARK, CA 94025			FALK, ANNE MARIE	
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
		1632		

DATE MAILED: 10/02/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/888,309	CARPENTER ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Anne-Marie Falk, Ph.D.	1632

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 23-36 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) 23-36 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All
 - b) Some *
 - c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
 - a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

The preliminary amendment filed February 19, 2002 (Paper No. 5) has been entered. Claims 1-22 have been cancelled. Claims 23-36 have been newly added.

Accordingly, Claims 23-36 are pending in the instant application.

Election/Restriction

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 23-31, drawn to a method for producing a neural cell population from human embryonic stem (hES) cells, classified in class 435, subclass 377.
- II. Claim 32, drawn to a method of compound screening, classified in class 435, subclass 4.
- III. Claim 33, drawn to a method of identifying differential expression of an mRNA, classified in class 435, subclass 6.
- IV. Claims 34-36, drawn to a set of two cultured cell populations, classified in class 435, subclass 368.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions I-III are patentably distinct, one from the other, because the inventions are drawn to materially different methods that require different starting materials, different modes of operation, and produce different effects. For example, the method of the invention of Group II requires as starting materials a culture of ES cells and a compound to be tested, whereas the method of the invention of Group I does not require the test compound. Furthermore, the method of the invention of Group II requires taking various measurements or carrying out assays, whereas the method of the invention of Group I does not. Methods of testing a compound or identifying differential mRNA expression are

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substantially different from methods of cell culture and differentiation. Furthermore, the methods are not obvious one over the other. Thus, the methods of the inventions of Groups I-III are patentably distinct, each from the other.

Inventions I-III are each patentably distinct from the cell populations of the invention of Group IV. Although the method of the invention of Group I can be used to make the second cell population within the set of two cell populations, its use is not limited to producing those particular cell populations, as the method can be used to produce a variety of different cell populations depending on the culture conditions used.

Each of the inventions of Groups I-IV requires consideration of separate issues relating to assessment of novelty, obviousness, utility, written description, and enablement. For example, since a method of making a product has use only if the product made has use, examination of the method of the invention of Group I requires considerations of utility and enablement for the cell populations produced. Furthermore, the searches for the inventions of Groups I-IV are not coextensive. Thus, search and examination of all 4 inventions in a single patent application constitutes a serious burden on the Examiner.

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification and recognized divergent subject matter and because the searches required for the separate inventions are not coextensive, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143).

Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named

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inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Anne-Marie Falk whose telephone number is (703) 306-9155. The examiner can normally be reached Monday through Thursday and alternate Fridays from 10:00 AM to 7:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Deborah Reynolds, can be reached on (703) 305-4051. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the patent analyst, William Phillips, whose telephone number is (703) 305-3482.

Anne-Marie Falk, Ph.D.

Anne-Marie Falk
ANNE-MARIE FALK, PH.D
PRIMARY EXAMINER